

# 10b

## (Aparihāniya) Vassa,kāra Sutta

The Vassa,kāra Sutta (on Non-decline) | A 7.20 (A:Be 7.22) = D 16,1.1-1.5

Theme: Conditions for the invincibility of the Vajjīs

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2019

### 1 Sutta summary and background

#### 1.1 SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHT

**1.1.1 The (Aparihāniya) Vassa,kāra Sutta** (A 7.20) relates how Ajāta,sattu, planning to conquer the Vajjīs, sends his crafty chief minister, Vassa,kāra, to consult the Buddha on their strength. The Buddha carefully shows Vassa,kāra that the Vajjīs are currently maintaining the 7 conditions of non-decline (*satta aparihāniya dhamma*). They are well grounded in solidarity.

By using the Socratic (question-answer) technique with the elder Ānanda, the Buddha lets Vassa,kāra hear of Vajjī solidarity [§11]. This confirms that the Vajjīs have been keeping up the 7 conditions, which the Buddha then tells Vassa,kāra that he has himself taught them earlier on in the Sāran,dada shrine, outside Vesālī [§11].

**1.1.2** The Buddha is making sure that Vassa,kāra knows what these conditions are, and that the Vajjīs, by keeping to them, are united and strong. Hence, Vassa,kāra is convinced that it is impossible for Ajāta,-sattu to defeat the Vajjīs in open battle. However, he gives a broad hint that only “**persuasion ... internal conflict,**” that is, either diplomacy or subterfuge, will defeat them.

The (Aparihāniya) Vassa,kāra Sutta presents the Buddha as a Dharma teacher who is also socially “engaged” in the sense that he makes positive efforts in judiciously teaching the Vajjīs in wholesome social action, and subtly warning Vassa,kāra (hence, Ajāta,sattu) not to cause any conflict by way of invading Vajjī country.

#### 1.2 BACKGROUND AND TEACHINGS

Two conditions should be noted concerning **the (Aparihāniya) Vassa,kāra Sutta** (A 7.20). The Buddha is reaching 80 and, as we know, will pass away in less than a year. King Ajāta,sattu is planning to conquer neighbouring Vajjī country. From the Buddha’s remark to Vassa,kāra that he (the Buddha) has earlier on taught the Vajjīs the 7 conditions of non-decline, we see the Buddha as knowing this and dropping a hint to Vassa,kāra not to invade Vajjī.

Considering the uncertain times and his own advanced age, the Buddha, understandably, follows up his teaching to Vassa,kāra by giving a series on sangha solidarity, that is, 6 discourses related to the conditions of non-decline and 1 on the conditions of conciliation.<sup>1</sup>

### 2 Sutta significance

#### 2.1 THE PURPOSES OF THE 2 TEXTS

**The (Aparihāniya) Vassa,kāra Sutta** (A 7.20) also forms the opening of the Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta (D 16) §§1.1-1.5.<sup>2</sup> Since the two passages are identical, neither can be the provenance of the other. It is likely that both these accounts reprise an urtext (an older source) or are based on it.

<sup>1</sup> For the sequence of these suttas, see SD 55.10a (4.3.2).

<sup>2</sup> D 16,1.1-1.5/2:72,2-76,10 (SD 9).

The (Aparihāniya) Vassa,kāra Sutta, preserved in the Aṅguttara Nikāya (a collection of teachings mostly for the laity) is a short, manageable text for the world-busy. In **the Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta** (D 16), preserved in the Dīgha Nikāya (a collection of long teachings) the same Sutta forms part of a longer narrative on the last days of the Buddha. Therein, it serves as an impressive record of Buddhism as a whole, but highlighting how the Buddha gives his last instructions, for the benefit of everyone, including posterity (that is, us today), and especially for non-Buddhists.<sup>3</sup>

## 2.2 THE PLACE AND THE TIME

**2.2.1 The Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta** (D 16), SD 9, opens with the Buddha staying on Mt Vulture’s Peak (*gijjha,kūṭa*; Skt *grdhra,kūṭa*) outside **Rāja,gaha** (Skt *raja,grha*), the capital of Magadha and one of the 6 main cities of India (D 2:147). It has been identified as modern Rajgir in the Nalanda district of Bihar, about 21 km (13 miles) southwest of Bihar-Sarif. Its southern flank is protected by these 5 hills: Vebhāra (Skt *vaibhāra*), Vepulla (*vaipulya*), Isigili (*rṣi,giri*), Paṇḍava (*pāṇḍava*) and Gijjha,kūṭa.

**2.2.2** As evident from **the Gopaka Moggallāna Sutta** (M 108), it is probable that king Ajātasattu was fortifying Rājagaha around at that time (or earlier) because he was worried that king Caṇḍa Pajjota of Avantī might attack him (M 108,2), SD 33.5. The Sutta commentary says that Ajātasattu knew that Pajjota was Bimbisāra’s good friend. Hence, Ajātasattu was worried that Pajjota might avenge Bimbisāra’s death at his hands by attacking him (MA 4:71).<sup>4</sup>

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# (Aparihāniya) Vassa,kāra Sutta

## The Vassa,kāra Discourse (on non-decline)

A 7.20

1 Thus have I heard.

At one time, the Blessed One was dwelling on Mount Vulture Peak outside Rāja,gaha.

2 Now, at that time, the rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta<sup>5</sup> of Magadha,<sup>6</sup> wished to wage war against the Vajjīs.<sup>7</sup> He said thus:

<sup>3</sup> For a survey of the structural roles of the 4 Nikāyas, see Joy Manné, “Case histories from the Pali Canon I & II,” JPTS 1995:1-128.

<sup>4</sup> On the middle country and the 16 great states, see SD 9 (16.1). On this episode, see M Pye, *The Buddha*, 1979: 63-71 (ch 7). On Rājagaha, see SD 49.19 (4) n at Sn 408.

<sup>5</sup> **Vedehi,putta** (Skt *vaidehī,putra*, Avdś 1.57.2 ff). Ajātasattu (Skt *ajāta,śatru*) (r 494-461) was called Vedehi,putta because his mother was from Videha, whose capital was Mithilā. But Buddhaghosa explains that Vedehī here refers to a “wise woman” and not the “Videha lady,” since his mother is the daughter, not of a Videha king, but a Kosala king (J 3:121, 4:342). The Jātakas know her as Kosala,devī, the daughter of Mahā Kośala and sister of Pase-nadi (Skt Prasenajit) (J 2:273, 403, 3:121 f). For details, see **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2), SD 8.10 (4).

<sup>6</sup> Magadha was separated from Aṅga by the Campā river, and its territory extended westward to the Son river, corresponding approximately to the present Patnā and Gayā districts of South Bihar. See SD 49.19 (5.7.4.2) n. Finegan 1989:85-90.

<sup>7</sup> “Wished to wage war,” *abhiyātu,kāmo*. Ajātasattu, having come into power, decides to conquer the Licchavīs of Vesālī and the Vajjī confederacy (esp the Licchavīs of Vesālī and the Mallās of Kusinārā and Pāvā). Before embarking

3 “Powerful as the Vajjīs may be, glorious as the Vajjīs may be, I shall uproot the Vajjīs, I shall destroy the Vajjīs, I shall bring upon them loss and misfortune!”<sup>8</sup>

4 Then, the rajah Ajāta,sattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha addressed the brahmin Vassa,kāra, chief minister of Magadha,<sup>9</sup> thus:

“Come, brahmin, go to the Blessed One and bow your head at the Blessed One’s feet on my behalf, and ask after his health, that he has good health, mental ease, vigour, strength, dwelling at ease,<sup>10</sup> saying:

5 ‘Bhante, the rajah Ajāta,sattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha bows his head at the Blessed One’s feet, and asks after your health, that you have good health, mental ease, vigour, strength, dwelling at ease.’

6 Then say: ‘The rajah Ajāta,sattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha, desires to wage war against the Vajjīs. He says thus:

“Powerful as the Vajjīs may be, glorious as the Vajjīs may be, I shall uproot the Vajjīs, I shall destroy the Vajjīs, I shall bring upon them loss [D 2:73] and misfortune!” [18]

7 And whatever the Blessed One should answer you, bear it well in mind and report to me—for the Tathāgatā [Thus Come] do not speak falsely.<sup>11</sup>”

8 “Yes, sire,” the brahmin Vassa,kāra, chief minister of Magadha, replied to the rajah Ajāta,sattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha.<sup>12</sup>

9 The brahmin Vassa,kāra went up to the Blessed One, and exchanged greetings with him. When this courteous and friendly exchange was concluded, he sat down at one side.

10 Sitting thus at one side, the brahmin Vassa,kāra said to the Blessed One:

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on his venture, Ajāta,sattu wishes to know what outcome the Buddha would foresee. Consequently, he despatches his chief minister, the brahmin Vassakāra, to consult the Buddha. On the political condition of India at that time, see SD 9 (16.2).

<sup>8</sup> **Vassakāra S** (A 7.20/4:17-21) relates how Ajāta,sattu applies his cunning through his chief minister, Vassa,kāra, who pretends that he has barely escaped with his life from Ajāta,sattu. Having been given refuge and hospitality at Vesālī, Vassa,kāra lived there for 3 years, secretly sowing dissension amongst the Vajjīs. However, it was only after 16 years that the Vajjīs finally fell under his sway. Since then, the most important Vajjī tribe, **the Licchavīs**, remained subdued for many centuries until the 4th century CE, when they would regain their power under the Imperial Guptas, with Candragupta I marrying Kumāra,devī, a daughter of the Licchavīs and becoming the mother of Samudragupta (DA 99; JASB 17 1921:269-271). For details, see Piya Tan, *The Buddha and His Disciples* (2004) ch 8 “The Thundering Silence” §9b.

<sup>9</sup> **Vassa,kāra**, often paired with Sunīdha [D 16,1.26, SD 9]. “Chief minister,” *mahāmatta* (cf Skt *mahā,mātra*) = *mahā āmacca*? PED: “A king’s chief minister [evidently more than one of them]: he is the prime minister ‘who was the highest Officer-of-State and real Head of the Executive’ (Banerjea, *Public Administration in Ancient India*, 1916). His position is of such importance, that he even ranges as a **rājā** or king: V 3:47 (*rājā ... akkhadassā mahāmattā ye vā pana chejjabhejjaṃ anusāsanti ete rājāno nāma*). — Note. An acc sg *mahā,mattānam* we find at A 1:154 (formed after the prec *rājānam*). See V 1:74 (where 2 ranks of **mahāmatta** are given: **senā-nāyaka** ~a the minister of defence, and **vohārika** ~a those of law); also D 1:7, 3:88, 3:64 (here with ep *khattiya*): A 1:154, 252, 279, 3:128; V 4:224; Vism 1:21; VbhA 312 (in simile of 2 ~ā), 340; PvA 169. Cf Fick, *Soziale Gliederung* 92, 99, 101.” See also VA 2:294, 5:1095; DA 2:540. Below, Vassakāra is mentioned with Sunīdha [1.26]. For details, see SD 45.6 (2.1). On **Vassa,kāra’s destiny**, see SD 33.5 (1.2.4).

<sup>10</sup> *App’ābādhaṃ app’ātaṅkaṃ lahu-ṭ,ṭhānaṃ balaṃ phāsu,vihāraṃ ... puccha*, lit “ask (if) he is free from sickness, free from illness, in a state of lightness, having strength, dwelling in comfort.” This is stock: D 1 204, 2:72; M 2:91, 108, 125, 141.

<sup>11</sup> *Na hi tathagatā vitathaṃ bhaṇanti*.

<sup>12</sup> Foll this, **D 16** inserts “Then, having ordered a number of magnificent state carriages, he mounted one of them, and leaving Rājagaha, headed for Mount Vulture Peak. He went in his carriage as far as the ground would permit, dismounted ... .” (D 16,1.3.2), SD 9.

“Master Gotama,<sup>13</sup> *the rajah Ajāta,sattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha, bows his head at the Blessed One’s feet, and asks after your health, that you have good health, mental ease, vigour, strength, dwelling at ease.*

*The rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha, desires to wage war against the Vajjīs. He says thus: ‘Powerful as the Vajjīs may be, glorious as the Vajjīs may be, I shall uproot the Vajjīs, I shall destroy the Vajjīs, I shall bring upon them loss and misfortune!’”*

### The 7 conditions for a nation’s welfare<sup>14</sup>

**11** At that time, the venerable **Ānanda** was standing behind the Blessed One, fanning him.<sup>15</sup> Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda thus:

(1) “What now, Ānanda, have you heard that **the Vajjīs gather regularly** and their gatherings are well attended?”

“Bhante, I have heard that *the Vajjīs gather regularly and their gatherings are well attended.*”

“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs gather regularly and their gatherings are well attended, Ānanda, only the growth of the Vajjīs is to be expected, not their decline.”

(2) “What now, Ānanda, [D 2:74] have you heard that the Vajjīs **assemble in fellowship, adjourn in fellowship and manage Vajjī affairs<sup>16</sup> in fellowship?**”

“Bhante, I have heard that *the Vajjīs gather in fellowship, adjourn in fellowship and conduct Vajjī affairs in fellowship.*”

“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs gather in fellowship, [19] adjourn in fellowship, and conduct Vajjī affairs in fellowship, Ānanda, *only the growth of the Vajjīs is to be expected, not their decline.*”

<sup>13</sup> Note that **Vassa,kāra** addresses the Buddha as *bho gotama*, in a manner different from Ajātasattu’s instruction (where *bhante* is used). Evidently, Vassa,kāra shows only nominal respect to the Buddha. See D 16,1.29n (SD 9). The Majjhima Comy (to the Gopaka Moggallāna S, M 108) has a curious story about Vassakāra: once, seeing Mahā Kaccāna descending Mt Vulture Peak, he remarks that Mahā Kaccāna looked just like a monkey. Hearing this, the Buddha remarks that unless Vassakāra asks for the elder’s forgiveness, he would be born as a monkey in Veḷu,vana. Vassa,kāra, fearing the Buddha’s prophecy coming true, had various fruit trees and other trees planted in Veḷu,vana, to be of use to him as a monkey. After his death, he was actually reborn as a monkey who answered to the name Vassa,kāra! (MA 4:73)

<sup>14</sup> The traditional texts (such as the CSCD) call this section **rāja aparahāniya,dhammā**, “the king’s conditions for non-decline.” The source of this set of 7 conditions is **Sārandada S** (A 7.19), SD 55.10a. See also SD 9 (10.1) above.

<sup>15</sup> The Pali Canon records are at least 6 instances of a monk fanning the Buddha: (1) Nāga,samāla (**Mahā Sīhanāda S**, M 12.64/1:83); (2) Sāriputta (**Dīgha,nakha S**, M 74.14/ 1:501 f); (3) Ānanda (2 instances): **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16,1.4/2:73) & **Vassakāra S** (A 7.20,2/4:18); (4) Upavāṇa (2 instances): **Pāsādika S** (D 29) mentions Upavāṇa fanning the Buddha, ie, just after the Buddha has given Cunda Samaṇ’uddesa an instruction on the 4 satipatthanas (D 29,41/3:141), which is probably on a different occasion from the instance reported in **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16,5.4/2:138), when again he fans the dying Buddha. Comy says that although the Buddha is fanned, he feels neither warm nor cold (AA 4:14). Analayo notes that while the Majjhima rarely mention a monk fanning the Buddha, the Madhyama Āgama (in Chinese tr) regularly depicts the Buddha being fanned, eg MĀ 33 = T1.474a19 || M 106; MĀ 204 = T1.775c17 || M 26; MĀ 205 = T1.779a10 || M 64; MĀ 212 = T1.793a1 || M 90; MĀ 213 = T.1.797b-19 || M 89 (2005:54 n83). Cf Thich Minh Chau, *The Chinese Madhyama Āgama and the Pāli Majjhima Nikāya*, 1991: 30.

<sup>16</sup> “Vajjī affairs,” *vajjī,karaṇīyā*, lit, “that which should be done by the Vajjīs,” ie, their duties of state and their civil and common duties.

(3) What now, Ānanda, have you heard that the Vajjīs **do not authorize** what has not been authorized, and do not abolish what has been authorized, but conduct themselves in accordance with the Vajjī code?<sup>17</sup>

“Bhante, I have heard that *the Vajjīs do not authorize what has not been authorized, and do not abolish what has been authorized, but conduct themselves in accordance with the Vajjī code.*”

“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs do not authorize what has not been authorized, and do not abolish what has been authorized, but conduct themselves in accordance with the Vajjī code, Ānanda, *only the growth of the Vajjīs is to be expected, not their decline.*”

(4) What now, Ānanda, have you heard that the Vajjīs honour, respect, esteem, revere **the Vajjī elders** and consider it worthwhile to listen to them?<sup>18</sup>

“Bhante, I have heard that *the Vajjīs honour, respect, esteem, revere the Vajjī elders and consider it worthwhile to listen to them.*”

“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs honour, respect, esteem, revere the Vajjī elders and consider it worthwhile to listen to them, Ānanda, *only the growth of the Vajjīs is to be expected, not their decline.*”

(5) What now, Ānanda, have you heard that the Vajjīs **do not forcibly abduct women and maidens of family**, compelling them [the women] to cohabit with them?<sup>19</sup>

“Bhante, I have heard that *the Vajjīs do not forcibly abduct women and maidens of family, compelling them [the women] to live with them.*”

“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs do not forcibly abduct women and maidens of family, compelling them [the women] to live with them, Ānanda, *only the growth of the Vajjīs is to be expected, not their decline.*”

(6) What now, Ānanda, have you heard that the Vajjīs honour, respect, esteem, revere **the Vajjī shrines**, both that are within (the city)<sup>18</sup> and that are outside it, and do not neglect the due offerings as were given and made to them formerly?<sup>20</sup> [D 2:75]

“Bhante, I have heard that *the Vajjīs honour, respect, esteem, revere the Vajjī shrines, both those within the city and outside it, and do not neglect the due offerings as were given and made to them formerly.*”

“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs **[20]** honour, respect, esteem, revere the Vajjī shrines, both those within (the city) and outside, and do not neglect the due offerings as were given and made to them formerly, Ānanda, *only the growth of the Vajjīs is to be expected, not their decline.*”

(7) What now, Ānanda, have you heard that the Vajjīs **duly protect and shelter the arhats** [worthy ones] so that they who have not yet come (to the Vajjī country) would come, and that they who have come will dwell at ease?<sup>21</sup>

“Bhante, I have heard that *the Vajjīs duly protect and shelter the arhats [worthy ones] so that they who have not yet come (to the Vajjī country) will come, and that they who have come will dwell at ease.*”

“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs duly protect and shelter the arhats [worthy ones] so that they who have not yet come (to the Vajjī country) will come, and that they who have come will dwell at ease, Ānanda, *only the growth of the Vajjīs is to be expected, not their decline.*”

<sup>17</sup> “Vajjī code,” *vajjī, dhammo*, or “the Vajjī tradition,” eg, a criminal (such as a thief) is not summarily judged, but goes through stages of adjudication, until he is found guilty beyond reasonable doubt (DA 2:519). See SD 55.10a (5.2.1).

<sup>18</sup> Foll Comy, “located within the city” (*anto, nagare t̥hitāni*, DA 2:520,20).

## Teaching at Sārandada shrine

**12** Then, the Blessed One addressed **the brahmin Vassakāra**, chief minister of Magadha:

“Once, brahmin, when I was staying at the Sārandada shrine, outside Vesālī,<sup>19</sup> I taught the Vajjīs these

**7 conditions for non-decline.**<sup>20</sup>

Brahmin, so long as these 7 conditions for non-decline endure amongst the Vajjīs, their growth is to be expected, not their decline.”

**13** When the Blessed One has spoken, the brahmin Vassakāra, chief minister of Magadha, said to the Blessed One:

“Master Gotama, if the Vajjīs were accomplished in even just one of these conditions for non-decline, *their growth is to be expected*, not [D 2:76] their decline, what to say of 7 conditions for non-decline!

**14** Master Gotama, there is no way that the Vajjīs can be overcome by any war of the rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha, **[21] other than by persuasion, other than by internal discord.**<sup>21</sup>

**15** Well, then, master Gotama, I now take leave. Many are my duties, many my responsibilities.”

“Please, brahmin, do as you deem fit here.”<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> **Sārandada shrine** (*sārandada cetiya*), outside Vesālī, was dedicated to the yaksha Sārandada (D 2:75, 102; U 6.1/62; DA 2:523; AA 4:9; UA 323; cf A 3:167, 4:16). On shrines, see also D 16,3.1 n (SD 9) & SD 55.10a (5.6.2).

<sup>20</sup> *Aparihāniya, dhammā*. This teaching is also found in **Sārandada S** (A 7.19/4:16 f), SD 55.10a. The foll (**Aparihāniya**) **Vassakāra S** (A 7.20), SD 55.10b, records how Ajātasattu sends Vassakāra into Vajjī country as a saboteur [SD 9 (1.1) n]. It should be noted here that the Buddha’s remark here obliquely refers to his compassion towards the Vajjīs, and hence tacitly admonishing that they should not be harmed.

In **Kaliṅgara S** (S 20.8), the Buddha speaks of the strengths and weaknesses of the Licchavīs, hinting at their eventual conquest by Ajātasattu, and warns the monks of their own future:

Bhikshus, now the Licchavīs dwell using blocks of wood as pillows. They are diligent and ardent in **exercise** (*upāsana*). The rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha cannot find their weakness nor have a hold on them. But in the future, the Licchavīs will become delicate, with soft and tender hands and feet; they will sleep on soft beds with pillows of cotton until sunrise. *Then, Ajātasattu will find their weakness and have a hold on them.*

Bhikshus, now the monks dwell using blocks of wood as pillows. They are diligent and ardent in striving. Māra the Bad One cannot find their weakness nor have a hold on them. But in the future, the monks will become delicate, with soft and tender hand and feet; they will sleep on soft beds with pillows of cotton until sunrise. *Then, Māra will find their weakness and have a hold on them.*

Therefore, bhikshus, you should train yourselves thus: “Using blocks of wood as cushions, we will dwell diligent and ardent in striving.” Thus, you should train yourselves. (S 20.8/2:267 f), SD 55.10c

<sup>21</sup> “Other than by persuasion, ... internal discord,” *aññatra upalāpanāya, aññatra mithu, bheda* [SD 55.10a (1.2.2.3)]. **Vassakāra** will, in time, win over the Vajjīs and sow the seeds of discord and disunity amongst them through subterfuge. The Dīgha Comy relates how Vassakāra later conspires with Ajātasattu, who feigns to expel him from his kingdom on the charge that he favours the Vajjīs in the assembly. Welcomed by the unsuspecting Licchavīs, Vassakāra is appointed teacher to their children. Through his cunning, he caused the children to quarrel amongst themselves, and the conflict later spread amongst the elders. In 3 years, the Licchavīs began to be disunited, so that in due course, Ajātasattu easily overran Vajjī country with little resistance (DA 522 f). See prev n & SD 55.10a (1.2.2.4).

<sup>22</sup> *Yassa dāni tvaṃ brāhmaṇa kālaṃ maññasī ti*, lit “Please do what you think it is now the time to do.” This is stock: **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2,103/1:85 @ SD 8.10); **Mahā, parinibbāna S** (D 16,3.6/2:104 @ SD 13), **Sekha S** (M 53,3/1:354 @ SD 21.14), **Kaṇṇaka-t, thala S** (M 90,17/2:132 f @ SD 10.8); **Puṇṇ’ovāda S** (M 145.6/3:269 = S 35.88/-4:62,31 @ SD 20.15), **Avassuta S** (S 35.243/4:183,15, 30), **Khemā Therī S** (S 44.1/4:379,29), **Vesālī S** (S 54.9/-5:321,16, 17) & **Thapatayā S** (S 55.6/5:348,27). See Joy Manné, “On a departure formula and its translation,” *Buddhist Studies Review* 10, 1993: 27-43.

**16** Then, the brahmin Vassakāra, chief minister of Magadha, being satisfied, rejoiced in the Blessed One's words, rose from his seat, and left.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Here again we see Vassakāra's aloofness towards the Buddha as contrasted against how Ajātasattu himself takes leave of the Buddha in **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2): "The rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha, joyfully approving of the Blessed One's words, rose from his seat, bowed down to him, and, *keeping the Buddha to his right*, departed." (D 2,101/1:85).